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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4626th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 October 2002, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the progress on withdrawal of foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, stresses that these withdrawals must be completed, and calls for the implementation of all the agreements signed by the parties and all relevant resolutions of the Security Council. At the same time, the Council expresses its strong concerns at the rising tensions in the East of the country, in particular in Uvira and in the Ituri region.

"The Security Council condemns the continuing violence in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the attack on Uvira by Mai Mai and other forces, and views with great concern the build up of forces around Bukavu. The Council notes with concern that these actions add to the instability in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and threaten regional stability, have severe humanitarian consequences, especially by increasing the numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees, and could threaten the border security of Burundi and Rwanda.

"The Security Council calls on all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities immediately and without preconditions, welcomes the call by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in its communiqué of 14 October (S/2002/1143) for such a ceasefire and calls on the Government of the DRC and all governments in the region to exert their influence on all the parties to this effect and to refrain from any action which would further exacerbate the situation or undermine the peace process.

"The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to report further on the events in the region of Uvira and stresses the importance for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to increase its monitoring presence in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular in the regions bordering Burundi and Rwanda, as soon as security conditions allow such a deployment. It encourages all local actors, including the parties to the conflict as well as civil society and the religious organizations, to engage in talks in order to end the hostilities and agree on a basis for peaceful coexistence in the region during the transitional

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period in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this regard, the Council encourages the Secretary-General to consider using his good offices to promote and facilitate such talks, with MONUC providing support where applicable.

"The Security Council reminds all parties in Uvira and in the area that they must abide by international humanitarian standards and ensure respect for human rights in the sectors they control.

"The Security Council expresses its deep concern over the intensification of ethnically targeted violence in the Ituri region. It condemns all such violence or incitement to violence. It requests all parties to take immediate actions to defuse these tensions, ensure the protection of civilians and end violations of human rights. The Council welcomes the efforts by the governments of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to set up the Ituri Pacification Commission, as set out under the Luanda Agreement, and requests MONUC to provide support in this regard when applicable.

"The Security Council stresses that no government, military force or any other organization or individual should provide military or other supplies or any other form of support to any of the groups involved in the fighting in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

"The Security Council also expresses its concern at the situation in Kisangani, and reiterates its demand that the city be demilitarized.

"The Security Council urges all Congolese parties to accelerate efforts to reach agreement on an all-inclusive transitional government and expresses its support for the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General in this regard.

"The Security Council calls on all parties and armed groups involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to commit themselves to achieving a peaceful settlement for the region, and condemns any attempt to use military action to influence the peace process.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MONUC and the Government of South Africa.

"The Security Council calls on regional leaders to continue to support efforts to end the conflict in Burundi, and in this regard welcomes the recent visit of the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Burundi and the adoption of a joint communiqué by the two governments (S/2002/1142). The Council calls on the two governments rapidly to conclude an agreement on the normalization of relations and cooperation in security matters."